

tion. There was in the chief Executive of the State a manly, liberal and enlightened spirit of improvement; and in the co-ordinate branches of the government, and in all important quarters, there has been a disposition to reflect this spirit.

Another most notable sign of our condition is the disposition to form educational associations, and to act in this under the lead of the Common Schools.

North-Carolina has been a divided State; and when, soon after I first entered on the duties of my office, I expressed a strong hope that the Common Schools would be instrumental in producing a more homogeneous and a more united people, I did not hope to see so soon the signs of a fulfilment of this wish.

The friends of education and the educators of the State, like all other classes of useful citizens, long labored in discouraging isolation, without concert or known sympathy with each other.

The late lamented JOSEPH CALDWELL, a great champion of education in his day, and at no very remote period in the past, labored and hoped in vain for more united counsels and labors; and though he had many friends and many admirers, they did not hold up his hands, nor bring their good will and good wishes into effective co-operative action.

Shortly before I was elected to the place I fill an attempt was made to hold an educational convention in Raleigh; and after many essays in the papers on the importance of the movement, the day arrived and one delegate attended!

The difficulties in the way of such meetings had been overcome by the year 1856—and in the fall of that year a new era in our educational history was most auspiciously inaugurated in a large and harmonious meeting in Salisbury, of many of the leading teachers and friends of education from all parts of the State.

A State educational association was formed—and in the summer of the past year it held its regular annual meeting in Warrenton, attended by a large number of delegates, and adopted a constitution.